









## Challenges of Islamic Educational Institutions in the Digital Age

Ulmadevi<sup>1\*</sup> , Supriadi<sup>2</sup> , Ali Mustopa Yakub Simbolon<sup>3</sup> , Irma Yunita<sup>4</sup> , Nadyya Zahratul annah<sup>5</sup>, Rafiq W ri Asri<sup>6</sup>

<sup>123456</sup> *Islamic Education Management Study Program, Sjech M. Djamil Djambek State Islamic University Bukittinggi, Indonesia.*

**Abstract.** This study aims to investigate the importance of understanding transformation theory in increasing Muslim community awareness of the management of Islamic educational institutions. The method used is literature research with a qualitative approach. Research data is obtained through exploration of various relevant literature sources and analyzed using a framework or theory as the basis for research. This research adopts a transformative framework paradigm that aims to propose new ideas about transformation theory. Thus, it is expected to increase the awareness of the Muslim community in improving the quality of management of Islamic educational institutions. An interpretive approach is used to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study. Researchers conduct studies and analysis of library materials that are relevant to the purpose of research. Content analysis method is used to identify patterns, themes, and meanings contained in the library materials that have been studied. The results of this study are expected to provide a better understanding of transformation theory and its contribution to the management of Islamic educational institutions. In addition, this research has the potential to provide innovative ideas in the context of Islamic education, thereby improving the quality of management of the institution.

**Keywords:** Islamic Education Institutions, Digital Age

### 1. Introduction

Globalization is a phenomenon in which people from various countries are integrate into world society. This symptom affects many aspects of life. These aspects of life are not only related to the economic sphere, but also to other aspects such as culture, society, services, communication, technology, etc. It is also related to the emergence of increasingly intensive and widespread interaction between community members (FIANDI, 2023). Community members from other countries (Maryaningsih et al., 2014). This increasingly globalized direction of life not only presents challenges, but also presents various

opportunities for each individual. The key to this globalization phenomenon is technological progress (Simbolon et al., 2022). This progress has pushed the world community towards a society that is knowledgeable and information technological (Surono & Ifendi, 2021). Recent discoveries and developments in sensors, networks, and data analytics have given rise to the idea of integrating these insights into various industrial fields (Prasetyo & Sutopo, 2018)

Other changes are also marked by advances in Information Technology (IT) which is present in various forms of machines such as ATMs, televisions, smartphones, washing machines, dryers and other machines that are basically created for human convenience. The advancement of IT has brought significant changes in various aspects of human life (Silvia

Marlina & M. Arif, 2023). These machines are the brainchild of modern innovators who strive to create new tools that can provide benefits (Hariyati et al., 2022). In Islamic teachings, these machines and equipment are considered neutral because they only act as tools. Its use depends on the intention and purpose of the person using it. If the purpose of use is good, then these machines become a source of good for humans. However, if the purpose of use is poor, the machines can be used for acts of a criminal nature. Therefore, it is important for every individual to use technology wisely and responsibly, so that its impact can provide positive benefits to society and not cause harm or crime (Nata, 2020).

The use of technology in education has enormous benefits. Technology allows the use of heavy equipment in building school buildings more efficiently, saving time and effort. In addition, smartphones can also be used as media and learning resources that can help in the process of education and learning. With smartphones, students can access various information and learning materials easily and quickly via the internet. They can also use interactive and engaging educational apps to deepen their understanding in various subjects. In addition, technology also allows for better communication and collaboration between teachers and students. Teachers can use online learning platforms to assign assignments, hold discussions, and provide real-time feedback. This helps in increasing the involvement of students in the learning process. Thus, the use of technology in education brings great benefits in expanding access to education, improving the quality of learning, and creating a more interactive and effective learning environment.

Pesantren have long been a part of Indonesian society, and their existence is nothing new. Since long before independence in 1945, Islamic boarding schools have been known and recognized as educational institutions that have an important role in educating people and giving birth to many cadres of scholars and preachers. The Indonesian Muslim community believes that pesantren have a strategic role in spreading Islamic teachings in Indonesia. However, the role of pesantren has also changed over time. Pesantren is no longer only a place of classical religious learning, but also adapts to the demands of the times. Today's pesantren also touch various aspects of life, such as formal education, social, and practical skills. They try to combine religious teachings with modern science, so that students can become an intelligent, skilled, and competent generation.

Pesantren education is the oldest form of education in Indonesia. So far, pesantren education has survived despite competition with non-Muslim pesantren increasingly modern. Many pesantren were once successful, but are now in decline. One factor is that Pesantren is frustrated because it does not have an executive system to build a capable young generation. It should be noted that the existence of a pesantren still depends heavily on the charismatic or big name of the central figure (kiyai) and his successors or heirs. Pesantren can survive if the heirs have extensive religious knowledge, strong authority, educational skills, and other necessary qualifications.

Pesantren feel obliged to provide solutions to community education problems. Of course, revitalizing Kiyai membership is not the only way for Pesantren to survive, but many aspects need to be changed within Pesantren, such as curriculum, education system, and other innovations. Over time, pesantren must be renewed to meet the demands of the times. Especially after independence, people are increasingly given the widest opportunity to network with the outside world to gain as much knowledge as possible. Pesantren do the same by establishing links with the world of science, with more knowledge, allowing Pesantren to develop and continue to grow. So that now it is found that pesantren still

maintain the traditional teaching system, but have also begun to establish or organize formal education such as madrasah.

The development of information and communication technology as one of the causes of paradigm changes in 21st century education has its own impact. For example, in terms of the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in the field of education, it has been proven to have reduced the restriction of "space and time" that previously affected the speed and success of mastering science. Along with that, ICT advances have caused machines to replace most of the routine work previously done by humans, so that humans can focus on tasks that are more creative and intellectual in nature (Fakhruddin et al., 2013)

Another Islamic educational institution is the madrasa. As mentioned earlier, madrasah is an Islamic educational institution where students are not required to stay like pesantren. The curriculum used is also different from the pesantren curriculum. Undeniably, most madrasah students today are born as a digital generation accustomed to technology, not as digital migrants. (Prensky, 2001) Madrasahs in Indonesia, like it or not, have to face this challenge. The strategic development of madrasah is essential to achieve the vision of 21st century education. Madrasah reform must be carried out thoroughly in its management and management. The hope is that madrasahs in Indonesia can be ready to face the complex challenges of the 21st century. In this context, madrasahs need to strengthen, create, and maintain excellence or differences with madrasahs in the past which are considered no longer relevant to the demands of the times and society, as explained by Asmani in (Kurniawan, 2019)

Unlike before, the main challenge for madrasahs in Indonesia is not only about internalizing Islamic values in the context of the state and nation, but also preparing students to play an important role on a global scale. As revealed (Ichsan et al., 2020)

Today's learning demands are faced with an inevitable culture of technology. All education sectors must produce individuals who are able to: 1) communicate globally across countries, cultures, and religions, 2) have collaboration skills to cooperate with one's own nation and other nations openly and transparently, 3) have creativity in finding solutions, innovating, and producing new things, 4) think critically in the face of domestic and global information. These four abilities are referred to as the 4C's of 21st century learning that students must possess today and in the future. Responding to globalization and rapid digital progress, especially with the pandemic as a national and international disaster that requires all components of education to switch to online learning systems Coupled with the implementation of the independent curriculum that has begun to be tested since last year, Islamic educational institutions are increasingly improving themselves and preparing to face it (Tamin et al., 2022)

## **2. Methods**

Research conducted using literature research methods (Harahap, 2014) with a transformative framework paradigm, namely a research approach that uses literature sources as the main base to answer research questions and achieve research objectives. The transformative framework paradigm refers to theoretical foundations that emphasize the importance of transforming thoughts and views that can bring about positive change in a context. Common steps in literature research methods with a transformative framework paradigm may include: Identification and formulation of research questions relevant to the field of study to be researched.

Collection of literature sources related to research questions. This can be done through literature search through academic databases, libraries, scientific journals, books, and other relevant sources. Selection of the most relevant and high-quality literature sources for use in the analysis. Thorough reading and understanding of selected literature sources, with the aim of identifying patterns, themes, and ideas relevant to the research question. Content analysis of selected literature sources. This method of analysis involves the identification, classification, and interpretation of data found in library materials. Preparation of research findings and discussion of analysis results related to research questions. Conclusions and suggestions are based on research findings as well as implications that arise in the context of the study.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

Pesantren is an Islamic educational institution that still plays an important role today. Statistics from the Ministry of Religious Affairs show that the number of pesantren throughout Indonesia has reached 36,600. In addition, there are around 3.4 million active students and 370 thousand teachers (kiai/ustad) involved in pesantren activities. The elements that characterize a pesantren include the existence of kiai as spiritual leaders, students who live and study in pesantren, mosques as places of worship, yellow books as learning materials, and dormitories for student residences. With these components, pesantren are able to provide holistic Islamic education and maintain traditions and values that are upheld. Pesantren is an environment that supports character building and deep religious understanding for students, so that it remains a relevant educational institution and plays an important role in society.

Zamakhshari Dhofier said, (Dhofier, 2019) pesantren are not built with the aim of pursuing worldly interests, but are taught that learning is only a duty and devotion to God. Pesantren is a unique area without privileges. That is why the elements contained in the traditional pesantren system make it unique as well as a characteristic of learning in pesantren. Broadly speaking, the typology of Islamic boarding schools can be divided into at least three types, although it is quite difficult to distinguish the three types, namely Salafiyah (traditional) pesantren this type of rejects all forms of renewal, and Khalafiyah (modern) where this type of pesantren is open to all forms of renewal. Lastly, pesantren with this type of integrated attitude are a blend of Salafis and Khalafiyah where they are selective in accepting updates. (Ulum & Mun'im, 2019)

The digital age or multifaceted era is a common concern that allows easy access to information. According to Kartadinata, the number of digital generations who want to interact online is 54 percent in Indonesia and 55 percent in Asia. You feel like something is missing without social media. The generation that experienced something like this in Indonesia reached 69 percent, in Asia even 46 percent. This phenomenon shows that today's society cannot be separated from cyberspace. Society is willing to accept current

or ongoing strategic issues and be an integral part of them. Diversity, multiculturalism, political issues, economic issues, legal justice and other issues are topics of discussion at all times.

Generation Alpha is (Kurniawan, 2019) a term used by social scientist Mark McCrindle for people born in 2010 and above. It is estimated that there are about 2.5 million births in this generation worldwide every week. They play, learn, and interact in new ways. They were born in the digital age, when technical devices reached a high level of intelligence. The physical and digital environments are interconnected. As they have grown, technology has

become a part of their lives, shaping their experiences, attitudes, and expectations of the world. Some neuroscientists and psychologists even believe that their way of thinking is different from previous generations. (Wicaksono et al., 2021) Seeing this fact, it is inevitable if the Alpha generation is the generation that fills the world of education today, they are students who are in the study period who fill pesantren in remote parts of the country.

With this character, problems and challenges arise in the digital era that affect human attitudes and behavior, including students who live in boarding schools, including (Krisdiyanto et al., 2019)(1). Love freedom, (2) Love personalization,. (3) weak fighting power due to relying on ready-to-eat information. (4) Love to surf social media. (5) Tends to be weak in the values of togetherness and social care.

Meanwhile, Lisnawati (Lisnawati, 2020) presented challenges for students, including in terms of courage and creativity. This challenge applies especially to traditional Islamic boarding schools, where students tend to lack courage in expressing opinions to others. In addition, with the same learning method for generations, it also takes time to build student creativity.

In terms of the education curriculum, (Wahid & Hamami, 2021) stated that the challenges faced by pesantren include (1) Eight national education standards that must be met by pesantren. (2) The rate of Indonesia's population growth, abundant human resources is a challenge for pesantren to produce graduates who can contribute to religion, nation and state. (3) Character of learners. (4) Different understandings in applying the curriculum. In line with that, Wahid also concluded the external challenges faced by Islamic educational institutions, especially pesantrena in the form of future demands, public opinion and technological progress itself.

To answer this, as stated by Arifiah (Arifiah, 2021) what needs to be replaced in learning at pesantren is the learning method. Because the method as one element in delivering learning in pesantren until now still uses the lecture method while there are many other methods used also by the Prophet SAW in his time and combined also with existing technological advances.

#### **4. Conclusions**

As the oldest Islamic educational institution in Indonesia, pesantren cannot turn a blind eye to change. Because change is one thing that cannot be avoided. However, being too open to change will also contradict the values that the pesantren holds dear. Therefore, selective in accepting change is the right step in maintaining the existence of pesantren in order to meet the demands of the times and produce graduates who are useful in society.

In today's digital era, generation Alpha, born in 2010 and beyond, is filling Islamic boarding schools and facing new challenges. They were born and grew up in the digital age, having different skills and expectations in education. Challenges facing pesantren include the need for adaptation to changes in technology and the digital environment as well as the fulfillment of eight national education standards. In addition, other challenges include the courage and creativity of students, the character of students, and differences in understanding in applying the curriculum. To face these challenges, it is necessary to make changes in learning methods in pesantren, taking into account other methods that have been used by the Prophet SAW and combining them with existing technological advances. Thus, pesantren can remain relevant and effective in educating the younger generation who are fillers in pesantren in this digital era.

In facing the challenges of the digital era faced by pesantren today, transformation is one of the indispensable approaches. This transformation does not mean eliminating the values that have been embedded in pesantren, but aims to add better values so that pesantren remain relevant and can develop in the digital context. By transforming, pesantren can expand access to education and knowledge through the use of information technology, facilitate online learning, and utilize digital resources to strengthen religious curriculum and character development. In addition, transformation can also improve operational efficiency, expand the reach of pesantren through digital platforms, and strengthen the involvement of the pesantren community with the wider community

### References

- Arifiah, D. A. (2021). Solusi Terhadap Problematika Pendidikan Dalam Pembelajaran di Pesantren Pada Era Globalisasi. *Jurnal Pendidikan*, 9(2), 36–43. <https://doi.org/10.36232/pendidikan.v9i2.1110>
- Dhofier, Z. (2019). *Tradisi pesantren : studi tentang pandangan hidup Kyai dan visinya mengenai masa depan Indonesia* (Cetakan ke). LP3ES.
- Fakhrudin, M., Ananda, R., & Istiningsih, S. (2013). Perubahan Paradigma dalam Organisasi Belajar di Abad 21. *Perspektif Ilmu Pendidikan*, 2, 110–117.
- Harahap, N. (2014). Penelitian Kepustakaan. *Jurnal Iqra'*, 08, 68–73.
- Ichsan, A. S., Sembiring, I. D., & Luthfiah, N. (2020). Pendidikan Islam Menghadapi Tradisi, Transisi, dan Modernisasi. *Fitrah: Journal of Islamic Education*, 1(1), 107–123. <https://doi.org/10.53802/fitrah.v1i1.11>
- Krisdiyanto, G., Muflikha, M., Sahara, E. E., & Mahfud, C. (2019). Sistem Pendidikan Pesantren dan Tantangan Modernitas. *Tarbawi : Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 15(1), 11–21. <https://doi.org/10.32939/tarbawi.v15i1.337>
- Kurniawan, S. (2019). Tantangan Abad 21 bagi Madrasah di Indonesia. *Intizar*, 25(1), 55–68. <https://doi.org/10.19109/intizar.v25i1.3242>
- Lisnawati, D. (2020). Problematika dan Tantangan Santri di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0. *Tsamratul Fikri / Jurnal Studi Islam*, 14(1), 57. <https://doi.org/10.36667/tf.v14i1.379>
- Maryaningsih, N., Hermansyah, O., & Savitri, M. (2014). Pengaruh Infrastruktur Terhadap Pertumbuhan Ekonomi Indonesia. *Buletin Ekonomi Moneter Dan Perbankan*, 17(1), 62–98. <https://doi.org/10.21098/bemp.v17i1.44>
- Nata, A. (2020). *Pendidikan Islam di Era Milenial* (1st ed.). Kencana, Pranada Media Grup.
- Prasetyo, H., & Sutopo, W. (2018). INDUSTRI 4.0: TELAAH KLASIFIKASI ASPEK DAN ARAH PERKEMBANGAN RISET. *Jurnal Teknik Industri*, 1, 17–26.
- Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, digital immigrants. *On the Horizon*, 5, 1–6.
- Tamin, K. B., Ubadah, U., & Mashuri, S. (2022). Tantangan Pendidikan dalam Era Abad 21. *Prosiding Kajian Islam Dan Integrasi Ilmu Di Era Society 5.0 (KIIIES 5.0)*, 1, 338–342.
- Ulum, M., & Mun'im, A. (2019). DIGITALISASI PENDIDIKAN PESANTREN ( Paradigma dan Tantangan Dalam Menjaga Kultur Pesantren ). *AnCoMS (Annual Conference for Muslim Scholars)*, 3, 664–670.
- Wahid, L. A., & Hamami, T. (2021). Tantangan Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan

Islam dan Strategi Pengembangannya dalam Menghadapi Tuntutan Kompetensi Masa Depan. *J-PAI: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 8(1), 23-36.  
<https://doi.org/10.18860/jpai.v8i1.15222>